

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

17 January 2012

Public Participation

Statements and Questions from Mrs Virginia Neal, Clerk to Chitterne Parish Council

Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Site Allocations DPD – Proposed Submission Arrangements (Item 7)

Statement 1

Chitterne Parish Council are dismayed that the Valley Farm site is still included as a site for waste development in the Proposed Waste Site Allocations DPD. We feel that the real and clear objections raised by Chitterne Parish Council and village residents have been ignored. We would ask that cabinet members are given the full text of the objections submitted by Chitterne Parish Council before any decision is made. The summary in Appendix B is inadequate.

Response

Objections raised by Chitterne Parish Council and village residents have not been ignored. Following the last round of consultation, the objections raised were discussed with the County Ecologist, County Archaeologist, Principal Conservation Officer, Landscape Officers and Highways Officers and several changes to the site profile have been made as a result. None of the professionals consulted saw any reason to remove the site from the document, as all issues raised can be addressed through robust mitigation measures at the planning application stage.

A response to the consultation was also received from the Environment Agency who support all the sites in the document providing the mitigation measures set out in the site profile are enforced.

Cabinet Members have been given the full text of the objections submitted by Chitterne Parish Council as requested.

Statement 2

Chitterne Parish Council have no record of having been consulted during 2006 and 2010. The proposed development was discovered on the agenda of the Warminster Area Board before we were informed by letter. It is our opinion that Wiltshire Council have failed to consult adequately with Chitterne Parish Council. We feel that, in the light of our substantial objections, the process of consultation has been totally inadequate. Taking into account the potential and serious implications for the residents of Chitterne, villagers would have welcomed a more open and involved process of consultation.

Council response

In accordance with regulatory requirements, all Parish and Town Councils within and surrounding Wiltshire and Swindon have been consulted at all preparatory stages¹. All Parish Clerks were informed of the consultations through written letters and the parish newsletter.

Question 1

Chitterne is not 'local' to anywhere. We are unclear as to where the waste destined for Chitterne is to come from. Why is it necessary to consider a small, vulnerable settlement such as Chitterne for this development when there exist other more suitable sites with better main A road access as outlined in the DPD? Has the site been kept in the DPD purely because it is landowner led?

In the interests of transparency, how much would Wiltshire Council be paying for the use of the Valley Farm site – has it been selected as it is the cheapest option?

Council response

- *Where is the waste destined for Chitterne to come from?*

It is not the role of the plan to determine the specific catchment and volume of waste to be managed at each individual site proposal. Such matters will be addressed through any subsequent planning application process.

- *Why is it necessary to consider Chitterne for this development when other sites are available?*

Since 2005, 113 potential waste sites have been appraised across Wiltshire and Swindon. The Waste Site Allocations document presents a framework of 35 sites which offers a range of potential waste uses to meet the projected capacity requirements of Wiltshire and Swindon up to 2026. The final list of sites is now considered to be the best and most deliverable options for future waste management development.

- *Has the site been kept in the DPD because it is landowner led?*

No. The site is promoted by the landowner but has been subject to the same rigorous assessment as all the other sites in the document. We have dropped other sites promoted by other landowners which did not pass the appraisal process.

- *How much would Wiltshire Council be paying for the use of the Valley Farm site?*

The site has not been included in the draft plan for the benefit of the council. As the site is being promoted by the landowner, we cannot envisage a situation where the Council will, or would want to take it over.

Question 2

Substantial objections were submitted under each of the headings put forward by the Wiltshire Council for submissions – traffic issues, landscape and visual, water

¹ Issue and Options consultation – March 2006; Additional informal consultation – January 2010; and Pre-submission consultation – June 2011.

environment, biodiversity/geodiversity, historic, environment and cultural heritage

In particular the issue of traffic has been ignored. Chitterne already suffers from heavy and speeding traffic (rat running to avoid the jams on the A303) causing community severance and severe danger to villagers who take their lives in their hands when walking, cycling catching the school bus or riding on the B390, where in places there is no footpath and is very narrow. The road from Tilshead is very narrow and unsuitable for any type of lorry.

In the light of this very obvious problem, why is the site at Valley farm still being considered as a site for local recycling and waste transfer when clearly the increase in vehicle movements will exacerbate the already very dangerous roads?

In the matter of traffic, we are supported by the findings of the Atkins Report (2.1.2) *The village of Chitterne is subject to an 18 tonne weight restriction, meaning that all vehicles should only route via the A36 to access the site.* May we ask how this is going to be achieved?

Council response

The concerns raised in relation to traffic will be addressed by adopted waste policy (WDC11) and through any subsequent detailed planning application process. The plan presents proposals and as such, cannot comment on, or pre-determine a specific detail (such as the precise nature of routeing agreements) until a planning application has been put forward. The site profile states that a Capacity/Impact Assessment and Transport Assessment will be required as part of any planning application. These assessments will need to identify measures to mitigate and / or compensate for any associated transport impacts.

Supplementary questions

1. It is clear from the Atkins that traffic accessing the proposed site should only do so from the west; however, the council has proposed an impact assessment on traffic approaching from the east. Does this mean they intend to ignore the clear recommendation of their own consultants?

Council response

The village of Chitterne is subject to an 18 tonne weight restriction, but the Traffic Regulation Order for the B390 / C22 states that the weight restriction does not apply if the vehicle is:

- (a) Being used for the purposes of loading and unloading
- (b) An 'authorised vehicle' and is travelling to and from and 'operating centre' in, or adjacent to the road.

In recognition of this, the site profile states that "Development at the site should be controlled by condition and legal agreement to prevent, or at least minimise, unnecessary vehicle movements accessing or leaving via Chitterne village.

Thank you for pointing the text error. We will ensure that the site profile text is amended to reflect the need for an impact assessment on traffic approaching from the west.

2. Atkins has identified risks to the public water supply through groundwater contamination; flooding and contamination of a vulnerable main aquifer. Why are the council proposing to continue to pursue the use of the Valley Farm site in the face of these clear and present dangers?

Council response

The Environment Agency has been consulted at all stages in the preparation of the document and have no objections to the site being allocated for waste uses, provided the mitigation measures set out in the site profile are enforced.

3. Why are Wiltshire Council even considering such an inappropriate development within the open and rolling countryside of Salisbury Plain on a major tourist route between Salisbury, Bath and Stonehenge?

Council response

The Landscape Officer, Conservation Officer and County Archaeologist have been consulted in the preparation of the document and they support the site being allocated for waste uses, provided the mitigation measures set out in the site profile are enforced.

4. We note that Ludgershall has been removed from the DPD for reasons not dissimilar to those demonstrated by Chitterne. Why?

Council response

The Castledown Business Park site at Ludgershall has been removed from the plan for the reasons summarised in the Cabinet Report (paragraphs 13 to 15). These are repeated for ease of reference below.

- “13. In terms of the level of objection received, the majority of concerns related to the proposals at Ludgershall (Castledown Business Park and Pickpit Hill). The majority of these objections were generated by a community organised petition, signed by 399 people. The main issues presented were concerned with the impact of waste development on the local community and the surrounding land uses that have been developed since the site was first proposed back in 2005. In particular, concerns were raised regarding Castledown Business Park related to the proximity of Wellington Academy, scale of operation in terms of vehicle movement (road safety, congestion issues), low level of employment generated by waste uses and support for the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy that identifies Castledown Business Park as a Principal Employment Area, where activities falling within use classes B1, B2 and B8 are promoted. This called into question the suitability of the use of this site for waste management facilities.*
- 14. It should also be noted that, during the final round of consultation, Cabinet Capital Assets Committee on 14 June 2011 agreed that the Council purchase Castledown Business Park to help stimulate regeneration opportunities in the area accordance with Council’s Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan focuses on delivery of new jobs across Wiltshire.*
- 15. These factors have been fully considered and as result the Castledown Business Park site has been removed from the plan.”*

5. Will there be an opportunity to have a public meeting to deal with some of these major issues confronting the community of Chitterne in the near future?

Council response

The Waste Site Allocations document has now reached the final preparatory stage and is due to be submitted, along with all supporting documents, to the Secretary of State for the purpose of initiating the independent Examination process. The Examination will consider matters of soundness and objectors may be invited by the Planning Inspector to take part in the hearing sessions.

In accordance with the councils' Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) the council has endeavoured to ensure communities have been involved in the decision making process. In accordance with adopted waste policy (WCS7) the council will continue to involve people if, and when, a planning application is being prepared.